

MPSCS ASSISTS AGENCIES WITH INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS AT DUCK LAKE WILDFIRE IN MICHIGAN



Michigan's Public Safety Communications System

Crews continue to battle and contain the Duck Lake Wildfire in the Upper Peninsula's Luce County. The fire has burned more than 21,000 acres, and on May 25, Gov. Rick Snyder declared a state of disaster in Luce and Schoolcraft counties.

Many agencies came together to coordinate a response, including: Michigan DNR, US Forest Service, Michigan National Guard, MI State Police and Emergency Management, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Luce County Sheriff, Wisconsin DNR, Minnesota DNR, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, volunteer firefighters, and UPCAP (211).

In addition, the Michigan's Public Safety Communications System was able to assist with interoperable communication efforts.

The COW (Communication-on-Wheels) was first deployed to Schoolcraft County on behalf of the DNR, and then moved to Newberry for the Duck Lake fire. MPSCS Personnel and equipment were deployed, including portable radios, antennas, clips & bank chargers.

Staff attended meetings every morning to answer questions and to take care of any repairs requested.

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Joe Wassa, the local MPSCS Radio Tech, and designated Communications Technician (COM-T) for the incident, was assigned to support communication needs including programming radios being brought in from across the nation, and managing the state communication assets. He is still on site until further notice.

Besides using Mutual Aid and TAC channels set up at the surrounding towers, 8 separate Event Talkgroups have been assigned to cover both events at different times. As of May 31, 2012, there has been 112,487 Push-To-Talks on these 8 event Talkgroups.

For updates on the MPSCS, visit www.michigan.gov/mpscs or www.twitter.com/mpscs

For updates on the Duck Lake Fire Situation, visit www.michigan.gov/dnr.



Figure 1 - Photo Courtesy of Michigan Department of Natural Resources, May 25, 2012